

MEXICO'S FALL FROM AFFLUENCE TO POVERTY; FROM ORDER TO ANARCHY

Some of Those Who Have Figured in the Startling History Made by the Southern Republic During the Past Three Years—Land of the Montezumas Stood at Apex of Its Glory on September 16, 1910.

New York.—From affluence to poverty, from peace and order to anarchy and massacre, from one of the great nations of the world to one of the semi-barbarous countries—that has been the history of Mexico in the last three years.

Mexico stood at the apex of her glory on September 16, 1910, the centenary of her independence from Spain. Porfirio Diaz' government was the only Latin-American power, save Brazil, to maintain an embassy as distinguished from a legation at Washington. With a population of 13,000,000 and an area equal to the United States east of the Mississippi (leaving out the New England states and New York), she stood fifth among the gold and first among the silver-producing nations of the world; and her immensely rich agricultural resources were being scientifically developed.

But Mexico's peace and prosperity had fundamental weaknesses. It was dependent on the hand of a monarch, and its funds for development had come from other nations. The United States had invested nearly \$1,000,000,000 in Mexico; England, \$320,000,000; France, \$143,000,000, and other foreign countries \$118,000,000. Her own citizens had invested only \$800,000,000.

Furthermore, a group of self-seekers had gathered about Porfirio Diaz, the Iron Man, in his old age. They belonged to the "cientificos," and scientifically they extracted their percentages from every project set on foot. The foreign capitalists, naturally, had to transfer this burden of graft to the returns they extracted from their businesses in Mexico, and the money finally came out of the pockets of the common people.

Then there was the land situation. A few hundred proprietors owned practically every acre of the country. While the cost of living increased, as it has in every country of the civilized world, the great land barons evaded their share of the taxes altogether.

This last oppression was especially felt in the northern tier of states, where Americans and other foreigners were particularly numerous, and where the Mexicans could look across the border to the north and see a happier land. There developed a yearning for democratic government in the far north of Mexico, which resulted in the candidacy of Francisco I. Madero, son of an immensely wealthy and influential family, for the presidency in 1910. He drew up a scheme of reform, known as the "Plan of San Luis Potosi." He was beaten in the election—was thrown into jail and probably would have been "shot escaping," according to the pleasant little Mexican custom, had not his family been so influential. As it was, he was allowed to go to the United States, and there straightway organized a revolution. His father and his many brothers supported him. The Waters-Pierce Oil company supplied the sinews of war.

Fearing that American residents in Mexico might be murdered and American investments destroyed in the conflict, President Taft mobilized an entire division at San Antonio in the spring of 1911. A brigade of three regiments was stationed at Galveston, a brigade of infantry in southern California, a squadron of battleships and cruisers at Galveston, and a smaller fleet at San Diego. Mr. Taft notified Diaz that no hostile move was intended; that the soldiers were simply on the spot to maintain order.

In April there was a fight opposite Douglas, Ariz., between federals and

rebels, and stray bullets wounded five persons in the American border town. President Taft dispatched a sharp note to Diaz. Partly due to this, Diaz slipped to Vera Cruz and embarked for Europe. Senor Francisco de la Huerta, who had been ambassador at Washington, became provisional president until Senor Madero was elected, on October 15, and took office. The kind of suffrage possible in Mexico under the best conditions was shown in the fact that the successful candidate received only 23,000 votes. The defeated candidate, Bernardo Reyes immediately started a revolt, but was shortly put down.

Then Madero made what many consider his fatal mistake. He refused to follow the cruel methods traditional in Mexico when rebels are caught. He sent Reyes to prison for 16 years instead of following the "law of flight," which would have resulted in a shooting under pretence of justification. He caused no political executions. As a result, disorders were continuous throughout his administration. Everywhere bands of robbers, masquerading as "patriots," looted, burned, blew up trains, massacred and carried off women captives. The barbarous Emiliano Zapata continued to fight in the south



Gen. Venustiano Carranza.

under some theory or other. In the north Pascual Orozco, Madero's ally, headed an insurrection and even took Juarez.

Moreover, Madero, the philosopher, the dreamer, the poet, had not been able to create an organization of up-right men around him. His relatives led in the plunder of the state and the "holding up" of foreign investors. There was great pressure for intervention by the United States, but president Taft was adamant. The northern revolutionists made little progress after the United States had placed an embargo on arms and ammunition; but the old "cientificos" raised a new standard of revolt under the leader of Felix Diaz, a colonel of the army and nephew of Porfirio Diaz.

Madero imprisoned Diaz. But he refused to follow the adage, "When in Rome do as the Romans do." He let Diaz live. He sent him to Vera Cruz a prisoner. Consequently Diaz was

soon freed in a farcical raid, his guards firing a single volley into the air. The garrison declared for him. But Madero sent General Blanquet against him, and Diaz was soon a prisoner again. Again he was allowed to live, although the laws of Mexico allow a "traitor" to be put to death.

Madero had put down two revolts of the "cientificos." Now came the third and final one. On February 9, 1913, about half the army mutinied, and both Reyes and Diaz were liberated.

Reyes was killed in an attack upon the national palace. Then came the battle in the streets of Mexico. There was an artillery fight between the arsenal and the national palace, in which thousands of civilians, including many women and children, fell.

Madero's principal reliance was a hard-bitten old soldier, Gen. Victoriano Huerta. This man had earned a reputation as a fighter and little else. Suddenly he turned traitor to Madero. The political bee had got into his bonnet. Diaz thought he had come over to the "cientifico" leader, and it seemed for a time. Diaz and Huerta imprisoned Madero; his relatives and members of the administration. Then Diaz suddenly—everything happens suddenly in Mexico—discovered the leader was not himself, but Huerta! He acquiesced with some grace. Huerta was proclaimed provisional president under an agreement that Colonel Diaz would run for president in the coming elections. This was on February 18.

Five days later came the disgraceful episode in modern history—the murder of Francisco Madero. With Senora Madero imploring in tears for his life, the kindly-disposed president and his vice-president, Suarez, were shot "trying to escape" as they were being transported across Mexico City in the early morning from the palace to the penitentiary. Huerta was accused of murder in many quarters. Several months later, to anticipate a bit, Dominguez, the lieutenant who had charge of the squad which had killed Madero and Suarez, was himself slain. "Dead men tell no tales."

More crude methods were taken to get rid of some Maderistas. The president's brother, who had been minister of finance, was slain in cold blood in his cell, his nose and ears were cut off, and his body was subjected to other indignities.

This was what led President Wilson to say in his speech at Swathmore, Pa., "Government stained by blood cannot endure."

The question of recognition of Huerta, now undoubtedly in control of the most important port of Mexico, as the de facto ruler, came up. President Taft, who was about to end his administration, naturally did not seek to establish a policy for Mr. Wilson, having no desire to embarrass him. Just one week after his inauguration, President Wilson issued a statement which made it clear the United States would not recognize government by assassination. On this he has stood ever since.

Huerta had scarcely seated himself on the throne than rebellion broke out again, with Gen. Venustiano Carranza, who had been a close friend of Madero, in the lead. Carranza has made great progress, and in fact now controls more of Mexico than did Madero when Porfirio Diaz abdicated.

The situation since has been growing more and more serious, until many now believe that intervention by the United States is the only means of restoring order in Mexico.

Nelson O'Shaughnessy, charge d'affaires of the American embassy at Mexico City, has been the diplomatic representative of the Wilson administration, following the retirement of Ambassador Wilson, whose actions in Mexico did not please the president.

Girl Swallows 17 Needles. New York.—Immigration officials are considering the deportation of Bessie Rymarzenk, eighteen, because she swallowed 17 needles, in an attempt to commit suicide. They believe she is insane. Doctors have recovered seven of the needles.

bulet molds were also taken away from the City Hall.

"JACOBUS STOUTENBURGH." W. H. Lockwood, in charge of the old records of the Title Guarantee & Trust company, said that as early as 1749 the Stoutenburgh family owned a considerable portion of the present Equitable site. A part of their property covered the corner of Nassau street—then called Kipp street or Smith street—and Pine street, which was then known as King street.

The plot measured 70 feet on Nassau street and 82 feet on Pine street. In addition to this, they owned a strip that had a 38-foot frontage on Broadway on the same site. This part was devoted to a garden in which tulips were raised of such fine quality as to attain much celebrity.

Rubber Heels for Policemen. Malden, Mass.—Rubber heels and soles for policemen doing night duty were demanded by a delegation of women, who complained that the creaking of the officers' shoes disturbs their slumbers.

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CANNON BALL TELLS STORY

Dug Up in Equitable Building Site, It Was First a Capture From the British in 1775.

New York.—While working forty feet underground near the Broadway and Pine street corner of the excavation for the new Equitable building, a workman dug up an old four-inch iron cannon ball evidently buried since Revolutionary days.

At the offices of the Thompson-Starrett company who are erecting the Equitable building, it was said that the old records of the time seem to show with considerable clearness not only how the cannon ball came to be there, but also who the probable owners were.

In 1775 Col. Marinus Willett captured a quantity of arms and ammunition from the British at Broadway and Beaver streets. This was loaded on carts, taken up Broadway, and dumped in the vacant lot at the corner of Broadway and John street, in which lot Abraham Van

Dyk had an open-air bowling alley. It is not known how long they remained there, but it is supposed it was only for a short time and that they later became a part of a collection placed under the care of Jacobus Stoutenburgh in the city hall.

A few months later, in September, 1775, complaints were made that the arms and ammunition were being removed without permission from the city hall, and Jacobus Stoutenburgh was moved to defend his position as custodian in an affidavit made on September 6, 1775, to the common council, which read as follows:

"I, Jacobus Stoutenburgh, do hereby certify that there were 522 muskets belonging to the Corporation of the City of New York and under my care in the City Hall when the account of the Lexington Battle arrived and were taken away from thence by sundry persons, together with their several accoutrements. And I do further certify that 28 muskets more which also belonged to the Corporation and were given to Mr. Isaac Stoutenburgh to clean, etc., were taken away from him and at the same time, 6 iron